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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

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A FOREIGN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE STRATEGY FOR LATIN AMERICA

An Individual Study Project
Intended for Publication

by

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ABSTRACT

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➤ For the past forty years, the United States has used foreign assistance as a powerful instrument to lead the Free World in the effort to contain the spread of communism and to underwrite the growth of democracy. Our foreign assistance strategy has changed many times through the years to reflect changed U.S. security interests and priorities; and as we prepare to enter the next century, we need to reassess our national goals and priorities in light of emerging short- and long-term threats. The increasingly serious problems in Latin America threaten to destabilize the security of this hemisphere if not checked. Population explosion and failing economies eventually will bring social and political turmoil on an unimaginable scale. Powerful drug cartels distort the democratic process and growth of a number of Latin American countries today. More significantly, they supply the narcotics that poison our own society. Not since the Alliance for Progress, has the United States affirmed that its long-term interests were closely linked to the stability and growth of that region. This paper suggests that we must renew our efforts to support national development in Latin America and proposes adopting a revitalized foreign development assistance strategy that includes an expanded role for the U.S. military in that effort. It examines the process of national development, argues the significant need for increased U.S. military participation in foreign development assistance, and reviews earlier such U.S. military efforts in the region. Finally, it recommends some key elements to consider when formulating a national foreign development assistance strategy. (SMD)

INTRODUCTION

Early in his administration, President John Kennedy defined the nature of the existing global threat to the Free World's interests and pressed forward bold initiatives to ensure that the United States would provide the leadership in finding solutions. He looked beyond the immediate distractions of the serious bipolar Cold War and correctly assessed the detrimental long-term impact that a failing Third World would have on global order when he told the Congress:

The economic collapse of those free but less-developed nations which now stand poised between sustained growth and economic chaos would be disastrous to our national security, harmful to our comparative prosperity and offensive to our conscience. ¹

He further exhorted Congress to make a firm bipartisan commitment to U.S. leadership in the effort to assist the Third World to develop stability and self-sufficiency by declaring, "It will both befit and benefit us to take this step boldly. For we are launching a Decade of Development on which will depend, substantially, the kind of world in which we and our children shall live." ²

By March 1961, he had translated the principles of his Development Decade

into executive initiatives by establishing the Peace Corps and launching the Alliance for Progress in Latin America.³ By the end of 1961, Congress had passed the comprehensive Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA 1961) which structured and enacted the U.S. strategy to "promote the foreign policy, security, and general welfare of the United States by assisting peoples of the world in their efforts toward economic development and internal and external security, ..." ⁴ Part I of FAA 1961, entitled the Act for International Development, dealt with primarily civilian programs for economic and developmental assistance to Third World nations; while Part II, the International Peace and Security Act, provided for military assistance for internal and external defense.⁵

Today, twenty-eight years later, as a new administration assumes the challenges of Free World leadership, the United States and the world are significantly different in many respects from what they were in 1961. However, two things today certainly would seem familiar to President Kennedy. First, a slightly battered but wiser United States still wears the mantle of world leadership and, second, the ills of the Third World remain a critical concern to us. While foreign assistance programs continue to be a part of U.S. foreign policy, many other national and international issues have distracted us from our earlier commitment and many Third World problems have become increasingly worse.

There are today compelling practical, if not moral, imperatives that

underscore the critical need to reassess U.S. national interests vis-a-vis a failing Third World, with particular emphasis on the serious impact that current political, economic, and social problems in Latin America have on our own hemispheric stability and growth. We need to formulate a new national strategy for foreign development assistance for the region which addresses today's issues and priorities and calls for a revitalized national commitment to the task. This paper reviews the historical evolution of U.S. interests in Latin America to the present time, defines a proposed concept of foreign development assistance, and provides a brief overview of the process of national development. It then narrows in focus to examine the significant role of the military element in national development in Latin America, reviews earlier U.S. military efforts to promote nationbuilding in the region, and recounts lessons-learned. Finally, the paper proposes some key considerations for formulating a future foreign development assistance strategy. Throughout, the principal emphasis will be on the military element of developmental assistance, rather than on the structure or application of economic aid programs or policies.

BACKGROUND

The United States has long recognized the importance of hemispheric stability as a key element of its own national security. As early as 1823, President James Monroe developed what was to become a cornerstone of U.S.

foreign policy for Latin America that remains applicable today. In his annual message to the Congress, he articulated a doctrine that clearly delineated the New World sphere of influence as being separate and distinct from that of the Old World. He stated that, henceforth, the United States would tolerate no new European colonization in the Western Hemisphere and that any such effort by a European power would be considered as an act of hostility against the United States.⁶ This policy of unilateral U.S. protection of the Western hemisphere, which has come to be known as the Monroe Doctrine, has been variously interpreted and invoked by a number of Presidents since Monroe's time in the name of protecting U.S. national interests. In recent history, however, the U.S. has taken a more enlightened approach to its Latin American policy making by undertaking foreign policy formulation in consultation with individual Latin American nations and with hemispheric interests in mind.⁷

Today, we continue to recognize that U.S. national security remains linked closely with Latin American regional security. Additionally, we officially acknowledge that while insurgencies such as that currently being countered in El Salvador pose an urgent near-term threat, there are numerous other challenges which imperil the future stability of the hemisphere. Indeed, the present U.S. security strategy for the Western hemisphere stresses the importance of eliminating Soviet influence in the region but, further, confirms U.S. commitment

to "the interdependent regional objectives of democracy and freedom, peace, and economic progress." That is to say, U.S. interests are best served by pursuing the mutually-supporting objectives of (1) directly countering any Soviet attempt to establish a foothold in the Western hemisphere and (2) undertaking a more long-term effort to underwrite the growth and consolidation of democratic, economically-sound states throughout the region. Of significance, the task of protecting the hemisphere from Communist encroachment is, in the final analysis, inextricably dependent upon that of nurturing the development of stable, self-sufficient nations throughout Latin America. Without accomplishing the latter, the former is a futile waste of national effort.

A FOREIGN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE STRATEGY-- AN URGENT PRIORITY FOR LATIN AMERICA

While the United States' foreign policy, trade, and security efforts today are primarily East-West issues, it is extremely likely that during the 21st century U.S. national interests will be seriously threatened by significant crises in this hemisphere. Therefore, although Europe, Asia, and the Middle East will always figure prominently in U.S. national strategy, deteriorating conditions in Latin America dictate that we begin to focus now on a strategy to minimize and manage an incipient threat to regional stability there. The task is formidable because it requires a serious national commitment of energy and resources during an era of

increasing fiscal constraint, as well as a clear understanding of the true nature of the problem. While insurgency is recognized currently as a principal threat to the security of several Latin American nations, the region's burgeoning social, political, and economic problems pose a more critical, long-term threat to our national interests.

Increasing regional instability resulting from the failure to overcome widespread poverty and illiteracy, population explosion and migrations, the growing debilitating influence of powerful drug cartels, and crippling national indebtedness and double-digit inflation potentially carries with it consequences far worse than an increased susceptibility to insurgency. Even in the absence of an insurgent threat, the impact on U.S. interests of regional political turmoil, international conflicts, and domestic collapse would be significant. In order to preclude such a doomsday scenario and reverse the present destructive spiral, it is imperative to shore up regional stability by assisting Latin American states to develop into viable, self-sufficient nations. To that end, the U.S. must formulate a comprehensive national strategy for foreign development assistance to Latin America into the 21st century and must revitalize the U.S. military's role in that effort.

For the purposes of this study, the term "foreign development assistance (FDA)" is meant to encompass the full range of U.S. efforts aimed primarily at providing advice and assistance to a foreign nation across the broad spectrum of

national development activities. It includes those existing U.S. foreign assistance programs which are determined to be effective within the context of the FDA strategy, as well as a greatly increased role for the military element in the realm of developmental assistance. A note of clarification--the U.S. military role in FDA is not foreign internal defense (FID), although it may include a measure of FID assistance in instances in which a host nation faces an insurgency threat.

The principal focus of FID is to advise and assist the armed forces of a developing nation in primarily combat-related activities required to defeat or forestall an insurgency threat, while FDA is an overarching effort focused on creating self-sufficiency through nationbuilding.⁹ Foreign development assistance is also not humanitarian and civic assistance (HCA). FDA activities are, by definition, meant to assist and advise host nation agencies in development activities, while HCA activities are performed by U.S. agencies themselves (e.g., roadbuilding projects, medical care, school construction, etc.)¹⁰ The difference is significant because, although HCA programs may improve U.S.-host nation relations and provide short-term or local material benefits, they contribute nothing to the process of national development and often risk damaging the credibility and stature of host nation agencies. Finally, FDA is not to be confused with military civic action (MCA), although the two are closely related. MCA involves those civil-sector programs and activities performed by indigenous military forces as

part of their own national development effort. ¹¹ The U.S. military element of FDA is directed toward promoting the host nation's civic action efforts by providing advice, assistance, and training.

The creation of a national FDA strategy for Latin America involves defining U.S. long-term objectives for the region, assessing the nature of the political, social, economic, and military factors that will impede national development and threaten regional stability, and then identifying and applying the means to achieve the objectives. Comprehensive plans and programs for resourcing and execution must be developed for each element of national power and at every operating level, from strategic to tactical. Additionally, provisions must be made to integrate, coordinate, and manage all elements at the U.S. national level, the theater level, and the host nation level. Critical to the success of such a strategy is an increased involvement of the U.S. armed forces in assisting the nationbuilding process.

TO BUILD NATIONS

Since regional stability is best enhanced by the emergence of strong democracies throughout the hemisphere, then it is in the U.S. national interest to contribute to such development. While potential for development and rates of development vary from country to country, the mechanics of national development

are generally universal. According to Professors Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., the four common challenges of national development with which all states must contend are those of legitimacy, national consciousness, participation, and distribution.¹² Legitimacy involves establishing effective governmental control over the territory and population of a state. National consciousness consists of developing, throughout the population, an identification with the national entity and the people's belief that their welfare is linked to that of the nation. Participation is the sum of the dynamics and pressures brought by all segments of society to influence national decision making. Developed participation normally is manifested by the stabilization of popular pressures at a level routinely manageable by the existing political system (i.e., stable, responsive government.) Finally, distribution involves the sharing of the common national wealth throughout society to the degree that it satisfies the expectations of the people.¹³

As a developing nation addresses each of the foregoing stages as part of its development process, it applies the total force of its national being (i.e., resources, institutions, society, etc.) to solve the attendant problems and manage balanced growth. The first two stages of national evolution--developing governmental legitimacy and a national consciousness--tend to be the easiest of the four to accomplish, since doing so does not threaten directly the elite sector

which normally constitutes the government's power base. As a government begins to venture into the third and fourth stages, however, it finds that its initiatives to distribute decision making power and to share the national wealth harm the interests of the elites and, consequently, severely weaken the government's mandate. As a result, most developing nations falter before the last two stages, since there is little hope of political or material enfranchisement for the people.

By clearly understanding the nature of the problem, the United States can contribute significantly to the developmental process throughout Latin America, and hence to regional stability. In fact, it is vital that such efforts be made while the situation is still manageable. The key to moving developing nations into the realm of power sharing and distribution of wealth lies in convincing the ruling power elites that development is not a zero-sum prospect. In conjunction with providing developmental assistance, it is important to demonstrate that national development brings with it augmented power--both nationally and internationally--and an increased share of national wealth for all. However, before examining the ways in which the U.S. can contribute to Latin American national development, two truths must be understood clearly. First, nationbuilding is a long-term venture. The complex process of political and social changes which created today's Western democracies took many generations to evolve. While it may be possible to compress certain historical stages in modernizing today's underdeveloped nations, the complexities of such social,

economic, and political changes will require rethinking how we will evaluate success and measure progress. ¹⁴ Expecting to achieve traditional milestones year-to-year is likely to be unrealistic. The U.S. commitment must be made for the long-haul; patience will assume a new significance. Second, of equal importance and frequently misunderstood or ignored, is the fact that while the U.S. can provide material assistance, technical advice, and encouragement to a developing country, it is the host nation's people who must build their own nation. This means that since long-term regional stability is critical to U.S. national interests, it is important to persuasively influence the developing nations toward that end. Building regional consensus and linking individual national objectives to regional objectives is imperative. The challenge for the new administration, then, is to provide the motivation, assistance, and guidance in such a way as to achieve the desired objective of national growth in a manner consistent with the host nation's blueprint for development. Both parties have significant stakes in the success of the venture but since the primary objective is nationbuilding, the host nation's prerogative must prevail. To do otherwise would guarantee failure.

THE MILITARY ROLE IN NATIONBUILDING

Any national strategy for foreign development assistance naturally requires the application of all the elements of national power in an integrated effort. The

importance of the roles played by the political, economic, and socio-psychological quadrants of the national strategy are obvious and are related to the traditional applications of those elements of national power. Less obvious, however, is the importance of the contributions to be made by the military to foreign development assistance.

The traditional role played by the armed forces in national strategy is twofold. First, the armed forces represent the potential military might of the nation and, in peace, serve as a deterrent force. Second, in war, the armed forces apply the military power necessary to achieve national objectives. In both these instances, the functions and outputs of the force are primarily military.

There is, however, a third role for the military element of national power--that of assisting in nationbuilding. Although it is a less traditional and infrequently specified mission of the military, such an employment of the armed forces certainly is not unprecedented. The U.S. Army has been involved with national development since the early 19th century. In fact, the United States Military Academy was established primarily to train a professional officer corps in the civil engineering skills needed to develop a national public works infrastructure. During the period immediately following the U.S. Civil War, the Army contributed significantly to the development of the American West. Likewise, the accomplishments of U.S. military administrations in rebuilding postwar Japan and Germany are classic nationbuilding successes.

A more recent example of military efforts in nationbuilding is the primarily indirect involvement of U.S. armed forces in the Third World during the 1960s. Although it was only an adjunct to the military security assistance programs conducted by U.S. Special Forces in a counterinsurgency context, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 recognized the employment of conventional U.S. forces in the role of advisors to indigenous military and civilian agencies in nationbuilding efforts.¹⁵ Later, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1965 officially expanded the military's role in developmental assistance by adding U.S. military support to host nation civic action programs as an objective of military assistance.¹⁶ Such a use of the military proved to be a valid contribution to national development and many critical lessons were learned that will guide a similar future undertaking.

Although the application of the military element of national power is normally reserved until the onset of hostilities, there are compelling reasons to consider its use in peacetime as part of U.S. foreign development assistance efforts. In addition to the technical skills, organizational strengths, and leadership abilities the U.S. military establishment offers, it brings another unique asset to such endeavors. It provides a bridge with the armed forces of developing nations, by virtue of common professional attributes, experiences, and mutual trust. This is particularly significant in Latin America because of the critical role played by the indigenous military in national development.

In Latin America, strong national institutions are few and those which possess the motivation and ability to bring about social change are fewer still. Besides the Church, the only institution which influences the majority of the society is the military; and of the two, the military is uniquely positioned to be an effective element of social change. In most Latin American governments, even those presently enjoying democratic civilian rule, the military is a significant potential agent for political reform. Further, the military can be a source of modernizing attitudes, especially as it influences the large numbers of conscripts whom it returns to society.¹⁷ Finally, by virtue of its structure, geographic disposition, and resources, the military can be a rich source of leadership, skills, and services that can be applied to national development.¹⁸ The military institution, therefore, must be aligned closely with national interests and its special potential exploited for social change. A vigorous indigenous military involvement is key to success in Latin American nationbuilding and, consequently, a significant U.S. military role in a national FDA strategy is critically important.

A NEW INTEREST IN LATIN AMERICA

By the end of the 1950s, the U.S. was engaged in a Cold War with the Soviet Union to contain the spread of communist influence wherever it appeared. The Soviet design for global expansion, appearing in the form of Marxist-inspired

"Wars of National Liberation" throughout the Third World, caught the United States not only without a consistently effective countermeasure but embarrassingly focused on the wrong hemisphere. The "Communization" of Cuba brought the shocking realization that we were virtually defenseless against a serious threat to freedom in our own backyard. And while the U.S. periodically had shown interest in the affairs of individual Latin American states through the years, the loss of Cuba to communist insurgency marked the genesis of the most serious U.S. interest in hemispheric security since the framing of the Monroe Doctrine.

As U.S. policy makers began to develop a strategy intended to thwart Soviet and Cuban influence in the hemisphere, new efforts were made to assess the prevailing conditions of the nations to our south. The existing realities were not encouraging. The countries of Central and South America were largely undeveloped politically, socially, and economically. National institutions and wealth predominately were in the hands of a small elite and, with the exception of a few states, the disenfranchised masses of Latin America were ruled by military or civilian dictatorships. Years of social injustice and economic stagnation had left their mark on the region. National armed forces were generally ineffective armies of uneducated peasants poorly led by a corrupt officer corps. Further, to our great dismay, we discovered that there existed a deep and bitter resentment of years of U.S. paternalism and benign neglect of the region. The net effect was that the nations of Latin America lacked the social, political, and economic stability, the

viable institutions, and the effective leadership necessary to provide for their own individual security against a revolutionary threat and that the entire region was generally fertile for communist insurgency.

THE ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS

Simply stated, the U.S. objective in Latin America was to create a defense against this new and urgent threat. The nature of the threat ruled out the effectiveness of the traditional U.S. armed response to aggression and, rather, required the United States to undertake a long and arduous program of developmental and security assistance in an effort to build regional stability. The Kennedy administration's strategy to achieve this end, The Alliance for Progress, involved applying a variety of U.S. civilian and military agencies and resources in a coordinated campaign to assist and advise our Latin American neighbors in their internal defense and development efforts. The task was daunting because of a need to accomplish relatively quickly significant political, economic, social, and military reform in order to be prepared to meet the real threat of a Cuban-inspired revolution.

The blueprint for the task laid out two broad efforts (one civilian, the other military), resourced at the U.S. national level and coordinated at the theater level and at the country team level for each respective host nation. While the civilian program was mostly developmental and the military's principally

security-related, each included efforts in the other's sector. The civilian program prescribed and structured the efforts of private organizations (e.g., CARE, hunger relief agencies, etc.), governmental agencies (e.g., USAID, USIS, Peace Corps, etc.), and international organizations (e.g., WHO, UN Food and Agricultural Organization, etc.) to assist, advise, and organize the civilian governmental agencies of host countries in the task of national development.¹⁹ The U.S. military program was aimed primarily at providing the host country armed forces advice, assistance, and training in the area of internal security activities (i.e., counterinsurgency activities.) It is significant, however, that although the effort was proportionally smaller, the U.S. military played an important role in providing developmental assistance throughout Latin America. The following review of this U.S. military effort at fostering national development will be instructional as a model from which to fashion a modern strategy to meet today's challenges in the region.

MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN FOREIGN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE DURING THE 1960s

For obvious reasons, the Department of Defense's mechanism for executing its military assistance programs for Latin America was the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), the unified command for South and Central America and the Caribbean basin. From its headquarters at Quarry Heights in the Canal Zone, USSOUTHCOM directed its Army, Navy, and Air Force component

commands and the activities of its U.S. Military Groups (MilGroups) located in each of the nations of the region. As players in the security assistance program, the component commands developed staffs, organizations, and policies that supported the national and USSOUTHCOM strategies. Although each service undertook the task slightly differently, the design of the U.S. Army South (USARSO) effort is illustrative of the entire program.

By 1962, USARSO had established a special action force (SAF), the equivalent of today's security assistance force, whose mission it was to provide training, assistance, and advice to Latin American military forces in response to their governments' requests. The key players in the SAF were 8th U.S. Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Gulick, CZ and Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 3rd Civil Affairs Group (Airborne) at Fort Clayton, CZ; the former being responsible for internal security/counterinsurgency programs and the latter for advising and assisting host nation military forces in their civic action programs (e.g., health, education, agriculture, transportation, construction, etc.) The 3rd Civil Affairs Group (3rd CA) numbered approximately thirty officers and 25 enlisted men, all of whom were fluent in Spanish and each of whom was a specialist in one or more technical skills applicable to national development.

A brief description of the military developmental assistance program follows. In response to a request for assistance from a host nation government, through the respective county team's U.S. MilGroup, a 3rd CA mobile training team

(MTT) or technical assistance team (TAT) was organized, conducted predeployment training and country orientation, and deployed to perform its mission. Types of missions varied widely, thus MTTs and TATs were tailored in size and by specific skills to meet the requirements. Normally, 3rd CA teams worked exclusively with the host nation military. One example of this is a six-man civil engineering MTT to Colombia that spent half a year planning and coordinating a comprehensive Colombian armed forces civic action project which involved building roads and community dispensaries and developing vocational training programs; while another is a combined literacy/public health/public sanitation MTT in Bolivia advising and training its military on implementing a nationwide civic action program for rural community development.²⁰ However, 3rd CA was also available, with country team approval, to directly assist in the civilian sector as well. For example, in response to a request from the Colombian Ministry of National Health, a 3rd CA veterinarian deployed to that country for a year to help control a devastating outbreak of equine hemorrhagic fever.

In order to provide cohesion and synchronization of the overall development effort, the guiding tenets were (1) The host nation civilian or military agencies must execute the programs--the U.S. role was training or advising, (2) All U.S. efforts (both civilian and military) within a given country must be managed and coordinated by the U.S. Ambassador and appropriate country team members, and (3) All program activities must be performed as an integral part of the host

nation's blueprint for national development and must receive the necessary impetus and support at the highest levels of the host government.

As an important adjunct to the civic action missions being conducted in the field and the U.S. efforts to manage the program, periodic international civic action conferences and workshops were convened by USSOUTHCOM. These fora ostensibly were designed to permit the senior military leadership of all nations to assess, from a regional perspective, overall program direction and progress, exchange ideas, attack problems, share lessons, and adjust the future course of the Latin American civic action endeavor. However, significant second-order benefits were achieved. Important intangible by-products of the conferences were increased international confidence that the program was effective and mutual trust that all neighbor nations were developing in essentially the same fashion and at a similar rate.

LESSONS LEARNED

How successful was the Alliance for Progress in general, and the military element of developmental assistance in particular, in contributing to nationbuilding in Latin America during the 1960s? The prevailing national strategy for Latin America which engendered and sustained the Alliance for Progress was sound. It addressed the perceived threat in a comprehensive way and signalled U.S. commitment to the region. If it finally fell short of creating a

hemisphere of viable democracies, it also enjoyed many accomplishments and had a positive effect on the region. Likewise, despite certain operational shortcomings, the programs and activities promulgated by the Alliance for Progress were fundamentally sound and well-executed. Specifically, the U.S. military's role in developmental assistance, that of promoting host nation military civic action as a key part of national development, was a valuable contribution toward achieving U.S. regional objectives. Indeed, in a 1969 evaluation of the Alliance for Progress, the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations recommended expanding the civic action component of the military assistance program due to its valuable contributions to U.S. policy goals in the region.²¹ To try to assess objectively the success of military civic action throughout Latin America in terms of kilometers of roads constructed, numbers of schools built, or miles of rivers charted is impractical. However, a 1970 USSOUTHCOM assessment based upon a subjective review of regional progress and the growing enthusiasm of most Latin American military forces for increased participation in civic action, declared that military civic action was a vitally powerful tool in the overall strategy for regional development.²²

The Alliance for Progress has been dismantled, the 3rd CA deactivated, and only vestigial signs of an earlier U.S. military developmental assistance effort remain today in Latin America. If the U.S. military role in development assistance

was a valid instrument in Latin American nationbuilding efforts and if the programs were applied moderately effectively, then what went wrong? Why is there such little evidence today of strong institutions and stability in the southern part of this hemisphere?

There were so many diverse forces at work that affected the success of nationbuilding that it is impossible to determine with absolute certainty the reason that the overall program failed. However, there are several key elements that may have significantly hurt the effort. In any similar future endeavor, some of these obstacles might be able to be eliminated and others possibly minimized, but they all must be carefully considered. The foremost handicaps were as follow:

1. The sheer complexity and difficulty of the undertaking. As stated earlier, a similar degree of social evolution had taken many generations in the Western World. The U.S. objective was to compress the time required for the change because of the perceived urgency of the threat of Cuban-exported insurgencies. This acceleration necessitated skipping certain historical stages through which present modern nations passed. While this may be successful in building structures and institutions, by using modern societies, governments, or economies as models, fundamental development involves changing people's attitudes and expectations--normally a slow, evolutionary process.

2. Misplaced emphasis on material development over social development. Because of an imperfect understanding of the nature of institutional development

and a tendency to use tangible results as a measure of progress, there was a bias toward project completion rather than on maximizing the positive effects of the project on the people's development.²³

3. Occasional parochialism and lack of cooperation among U.S. agencies and counterproductive competition for limited resources between host nation civilian and military agencies. Little can be done to control the latter, short of providing increased resourcing and assisting the host nation to design a clear plan to allocated them more effectively. However, the U.S. efforts can be better coordinated by developing clear strategies, policies, and implementing guidance for each element of the national FDA program as well as directing and managing the effort closely at U.S. national, theater, and host nation level to resolve differences and eliminate duplications.

4. Failure to defer to host nation prerogatives and priorities. In numerous instances, from the country team level to the local project level, U.S. advisors hastened projects along for the sake of progress or convinced their counterparts to undertake missions that were ill-suited for the situation. The result often was great effort spent with little return, frustration on the part of those we intended to help, and diminished U.S. credibility.

5. Concurrent ill-conceived and counterproductive U.S. policies that undermine our influence. Despite many successes throughout the region, the U.S. continued its paternalistic attitude toward Latin America. In a crusade for human

rights, we alienated irreparably many of the same nations we were trying to develop. The more strident our calls for human rights became, the farther these nations moved from our sphere of influence and, consequently, the less assistance they received. Only recently have many of these nations regained the confidence that we will not bludgeon them with the human rights club, although they clearly understand that protecting human rights remains a significant policy objective and is linked to U.S. foreign assistance. As the states of Latin America move toward democracy, the U.S. must increasingly apply "quiet diplomacy" in order to achieve our mutual interests.²⁴

6. Shifting national objectives and priorities. While the Alliance for Progress was at its peak, U.S. national interest began shifting from Latin America to the disaster unfolding in Vietnam. Our complete attention and, finally, our total national energy, were riveted on the Vietnam war and the resulting domestic cataclysm. There was eventually nothing left to apply to the now distant issue of Latin American regional stability--and the effort simply died.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A FUTURE STRATEGY FOR FOREIGN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

If a strategy is understood to be the construct that defines and matches ends, ways, and means, then we must consider each of those elements in formulating a new FDA initiative. The first, defining the desired end-state, must

be based on an accurate assessment of the nature of the threat and its likely effect on U.S. interests in the short-term, as well as over time. Unless the new administration directs a radical course change, the objectives articulated by the current U.S. national security strategy will provide sound direction for the Ship of State. But, over time, external factors may alter the nature or likelihood of the threat--if not its significance. These changes must cause the priorities and emphasis to change likewise. Admittedly, the security of Europe is now a more critical near-term imperative than Latin American regional development.

However, the apparent moderation of Soviet intentions (if not capabilities) we are witnessing, coupled with future successes in arms reductions and conventional stability talks, could diminish the magnitude and urgency of U.S. effort required in NATO. Hence, this hemisphere's instability could become a much more credible (likely) threat to U.S. interests and one which may demand a higher priority of commitment and energy. Certainly, three critical Latin American problems are emerging today as significant threats to our interests--drugs, economic disaster, and population migration.

The impact of cocaine on our society today is crippling. Its effect in the future, if unstopped, will be incalculably devastating. A four billion dollar Latin American debt, which can neither be repaid nor adequately serviced, hangs like a millstone on the economic institutions of the region. The deadening influence of such a debt discourages vitally important foreign capital investment and

threatens the economic collapse of nations already staggering under critical social problems. Likewise, serious population migrations brought on by crippled economies, particularly those from Central America northwest into Mexico and from the Caribbean basin to the U.S. East Coast, are applying increasing social and economic pressures within our own borders. None of these problems can ultimately be solved by tackling it directly. They are all merely symptoms of the region's failure to develop. The bad news is that ignoring the fundamental developmental problems or attempting to fix only the symptoms will result in further deterioration of the situation and, hence, an increasingly immediate threat to U.S. interests. The issue of Latin American regional development should loom large in any effort to readjust national priorities to address future challenges.²⁵

We now turn to a consideration of means. Given political realities and the challenge of competing priorities, it is a fact that plans and programs (ways) will normally be constrained by the sufficiency of means; means seldom are sufficient to match unconstrained plans. Equally germane, the means made available generally are a reflection of the degree of national commitment to an undertaking. It follows, then, that national commitment is key to program success. The support for (i.e., funding of) an FDA effort for Latin America must be solicited in two ways; first, by clearly showing the immediacy of the threat to U.S. interests at home and, second, by demonstrating that the effort can be achieved at a reasonable cost. As stated above, the effect of drugs on our own social fabric is patently

clear. What remains to be done is to link it with the damaging impact that regional economic collapse and displaced populations will have on our society, in order to highlight the need to act quickly and decisively in Latin America. In time, the other serious health, educational, economic, and political difficulties will become more apparent and will, therefore, strengthen the justification of the effort.

From a cost-effectiveness standpoint, an FDA strategy can be undertaken comparatively cheaply (in relationship to the efforts during the 1960s) and will provide benefits disproportionately greater than the costs involved. For example, during 1966, the period of greatest effort, total foreign assistance expenditures worldwide were \$3.2 billion--a mere three percent of the FY66 national budget (and .51% of the GNP).²⁶ By concentrating the main effort of future FDA activities in Latin America and reducing assistance to less critical areas, budget share could be held down. Undoubtedly, efficiencies can be found throughout by streamlining and tailoring the current effort to match revised national priorities. Several closing considerations that will make resourcing FDA more attractive during this era of fiscal constraints are (1) by its very nature, FDA provides the same categories of non-lethal, commonly sanctioned goods and services to developing countries that Congress has readily supported in the past and (2) like FAA 1961, new FDA efforts must be heavily dependent upon multinational investments and loans (i.e., from industrialized Western and Asian nations) in

order to succeed. For Western European nations, such investment might be offered as an alternative to increased NATO burdensharing. This reliance on Europe and Japan to invest heavily in Third World development is not unprecedented, as it has been a key feature from FAA 1961 to the present.²⁷

Finally, consider the ways. How will the means be applied to achieve the desired ends? What specific plans, programs, and policies will be required? Who will be the players and what structure is required to execute, coordinate, and manage the whole and its diverse parts? To avoid bogging down in an attempt to design specific programs, the following general recommendations are offered:

1. The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, with subsequent amendments, was a sound instrument and provides a point of departure from which to revitalize the foreign development assistance effort for Latin America. Changes must be made so as to focus renewed emphasis on this hemisphere and new fiscal and budgetary structures are required to match the realities of today's higher costs and diminished resources. In this regard, the 1984 Report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America (NBCCA) and the Reagan administration's resultant Central America Democracy, Peace and Development Initiative (CAI) provide a Central American analog on which an FDA strategy for the entire Latin American region might be patterned. The NBCCA, commonly known as the Kissinger Commission, proposed to the President 57 specific recommendations to foster democratization, economic stability, social development, and regional

security in Central America.²⁸ The estimated cost of fully implementing the commission's recommendations over the long-term was some \$21 billion in total foreign financing, of which the U.S. share would be \$10-\$12 billion in appropriated funds and financial guarantees. To initiate immediate recovery in the region, the NBCCA recommended that a U.S. aid package of \$8 billion in economic and developmental assistance funds and guarantees be authorized for the period FY85 to FY89 to be distributed among specific programs aimed at stabilizing the economy, strengthening the economic infrastructure, fostering democratization and human rights, and enhancing social development. It is significant to note that while the NBCCA primarily addressed economic, social, and political issues it recognized the destabilizing effect on the region of the war in El Salvador and recommended that U.S. military aid to that country be steeply increased and predictably sustained to allow El Salvador to defeat the insurgency.²⁹

Based on the NBCCA's recommendations, the administration, later in 1984, forwarded its Central American plan to the Congress in the form of the Central America Democracy, Peace and Development Initiative (CAI). While it closely followed the NBCCA proposals (adopting over 40 of its 57 recommendations), it increased the aid request to \$8.4 billion for the period and laid out a specific funding plan. A total of \$6.4 billion was to be appropriated in the form of economic support funds, development assistance dollars, PL 480 food assistance,

and anti-narcotics, Peace Corps, and USIA program funds. An additional \$2 billion was to be provided in housing guarantees, trade and commodity credits, and Eximbank guarantees.³⁰ Since that time, a number of economic setbacks in the region and an increasingly constrained U.S. budget has required a reassessment of the funding structure for the CAI. In 1987, Department of State, AID, and OMB developed a proposed modification to the 1984 CAI funding plan. This new proposal recognized a \$760 million shortfall in meeting original CAI program objectives by FY88 and called for extending the period of execution by three years to FY92 and increasing appropriated funds by \$500 million for a total of \$8.9 billion (\$6.9 billion appropriated/\$2 billion in guarantees).³¹

Although the CAI has been only modestly successful to date, it is significant that political, economic, and social progress is being made in the region at all. Such a program, extended to encompass the entire Latin American region, has potential for arresting the debilitating decline in regional stability and for underwriting steady, modest improvement over the long-term. This is particularly true if the program is augmented by a vigorous U.S. military involvement in the area of developmental assistance, as was earlier proposed by the Congress in its recommendation that the civic action component of military assistance be expanded.³² Even if the price tag of such a Latin American FDA program were three times that of the current CAI appropriated funding

requirement (i.e., \$21 billion over eight years), that amounts to only one half of our present foreign aid to Egypt and Israel alone. The return, in terms of long-term national and regional security, are probably worth it.

2. Overall direction of any new FDA effort should be centralized above the Department of State/Department of Defense level. While both departments normally have different roles in foreign assistance, there are program areas that overlap. This will become an increasing problem as military involvement in civic action grows. Therefore, it seems logical to vest primary executive and oversight authority in a separate functional agency--perhaps as part of the National Security Council.

3. Just as there must be a coherent and comprehensive single national FDA strategy that assigns objectives, allocates resources, and orchestrates the operations of all participants in FDA, there must be a comprehensive theater FDA strategy developed by CINCSOUTHCOM. The theater strategy must be a refinement of the national strategy and must be tied closely to the specific development assistance strategies prepared for each recipient nation by its U.S. country team. But, since program execution must conform to and support the host nation's development strategy, then the program specifics at theater-level must reflect host nations' priorities.

4. Finally, two systemic fixes need to occur in order to support an expanded U.S. military role in host nation civic action. First, U.S. MilGroups must be rebuilt

to provide the necessary support to U.S. military security and developmental assistance activities. At the height of such activities in the 60s, the U.S. military strength in MilGroups throughout Latin America totaled approximately 720 (370 officers and 350 enlisted).³³ Today, MilGroups have been reduced drastically in many countries and eliminated in others. While those 1960s totals may not be entirely necessary today, it is clear that each country team must have a robust MilGroup staff with national development, as well as security assistance, knowhow. Second, each service that would contribute to FDA activities should create an in-theater unit to perform military civic action support missions, similar to the 3rd Civil Affairs during the 60s. The unit must be separate and distinct from any theater security assistance force, whose missions are quite different.

CONCLUSIONS

Over the past forty years, the United States has provided some \$ 200 billion in economic and military aid to developing countries around the world.³⁴ That investment has yielded great returns in helping to preserve Western security by encouraging the democratic and economic growth of developing nations. Today, in an era of constrained resources, the new administration must make tough choices concerning how much foreign assistance we can afford to provide, where it will

go, and what form the programs will take. With the increasing magnitude of Latin America's social, political, and economic ills and the serious impact those problems are likely to have on U.S. interests in the future, we must revitalize our efforts to help the fragile democracies of that region with their national development as they struggle for their own political survival. A strong commitment to a refocused and revitalized FDA strategy for Latin America would serve as the foundation for insuring the collective security and prosperity of our hemisphere into the 21st century. And, as a cornerstone of any such undertaking, the U.S. military role in supporting indigenous civic action activities would be both vital and cost-effective.

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indebtedness, it may be more difficult to convince them of the benefits of eradicating drugs and drug cartels and of staunching the increasing emigration of their populations. However, for the U.S. strategy to succeed, they must buy into the venture. This will require an effort on our part to market the U.S. foreign development assistance program such that it conforms to Latin American national and regional blueprints for development and provides clear, tangible benefits to those nations who cooperate.

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